



# Turvey Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Spaces Report Updated April 2020



# **Turvey Neighbourhood Plan**

## **Green Spaces Report**

### **Introduction**

National Planning Practice Guidance states ‘Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.’ In preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, Turvey Parish Council has reviewed and updated the list of Village Open Spaces designated in Bedford Borough Council’s Allocations and Designations Local Plan, July 2013 and identified plots of land in the village that fit the criteria for Local Green Space designation. In addition, as part of a consultation exercise, residents were invited to suggest sites for consideration.

The plots have been assessed against the criteria in Paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF July 2019) that green space must meet in order to be designated as ‘Local Green Space’:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land”.

This report describes the assessment methodology, sets out the evidence and lists the sites proposed for Local Green Space designation

### **Background**

Neither the 2019 NPPF (July 2019) nor the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) gives any definitive guidance on the process for selecting a Local Green Space. As part of Bedford Borough Council’s 2015 consultation, a site assessment methodology for selecting sites was consulted and developed. To ensure transparency and consistency this methodology has been used to assess the sites that have been proposed in this plan.



Methodology

The methodology is set out as a flowchart in Figure 1. Sites which are allocated for development, have an extant planning permission for development or already have a national designation for protection (such as Turvey Park which is Grade II listed Park and Garden) have been excluded from consideration.

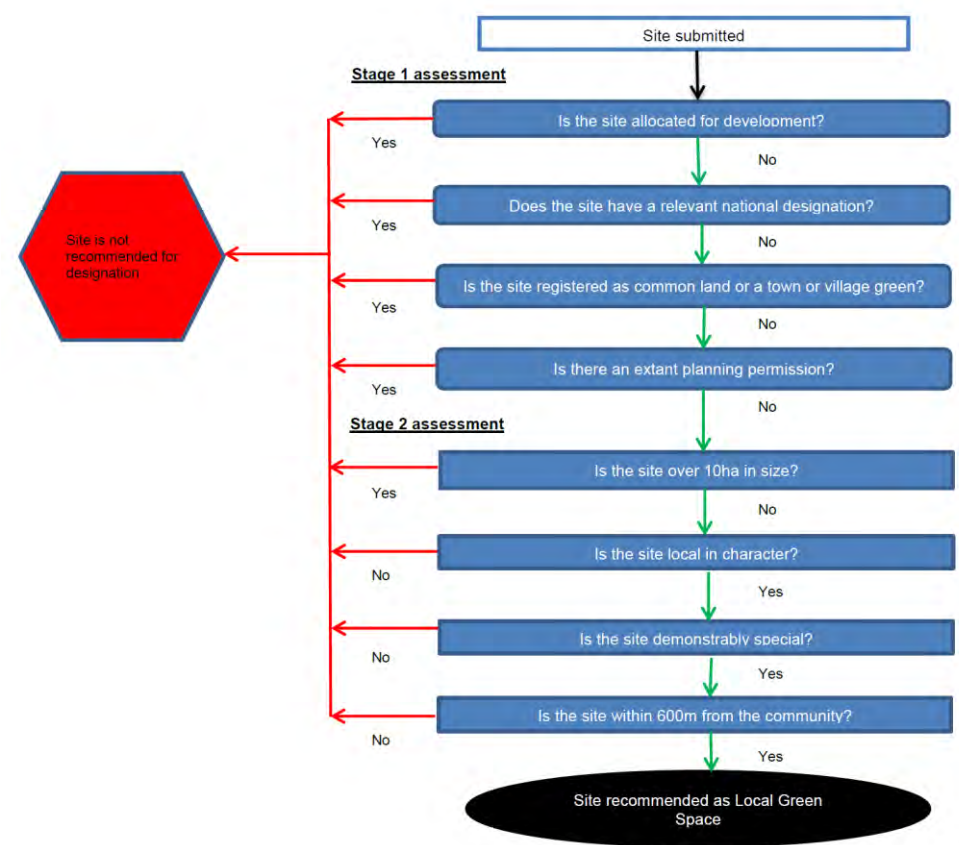


Figure 1: Bedford Borough Council Green Spaces assessment process (source: Local Plan 2030 Local Green Spaces Methodology September 2018)

The guidance given by the Borough Council for sites which remain is

- *The area is local in character and not an extensive tract of land.* The site should feel part of the local area in terms of scale and have a connection with the local area, which could be visually, physically or socially. The site would normally be less than 10 ha and
- The site promoter must provide evidence to justify that the site is *demonstrably special to a local community and it holds particular significance* by satisfying at least one of the following areas:
  - a. *Beauty* – for example, this would include the visual attractiveness of the site, its intrinsic local character, its contribution to the setting of the settlement or contribution to the surrounding landscape character. The site should be exceptional or unique to the area.
  - b. *Historic significance* -evidence shows that the site has historic significance. This may include the presence of historic landscape features such as hedgerows, ponds, or ridge and furrow on the site, memorials, or evidence of any important events or rituals that take place on the site which are an exceptional quality or unique to the area.
  - c. *Recreational value* – The current use of the site is a publicly available playing field, publicly available equipped play area, public garden/park, or allotments which regularly have over 80% of the plots being leased to tenants.
  - d. *Tranquillity* – the CPRE and the Countryside Commission Tranquil Areas – England map 1995, defines tranquil areas as “places that are sufficiently far away from the visual or noise intrusion of development or traffic to be considered unspoilt by urban influences”. The site should be located where it is relatively free of noise disturbance by traffic or visual evidence of human influences such as housing development, agricultural uses and associated buildings and mineral extraction.
  - e. *Richness of wildlife* – the site should meet one of the following criteria:
    - Documented and verified records of species included in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act and/or European Protected Species. Records to be considered should have been recorded since 1995 and come from either within the site or from within a 100m buffer where there is a reasonable likelihood that the species would use the site for living and breeding for a significant part of its life cycle. There should be a significant number of the particular species recorded on the site.
    - Documented and verified records of species of local importance included in the Bedfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan and local rare species registers (e.g. County Rare Plant Register, Bedfordshire Notable Bugs list or the Bedfordshire Red List of Breeding Birds). Records should have been recorded since 1995 and come from either within the site or from within a 100m buffer where there is a reasonable likelihood that the species would use the site for living and breeding for a significant part of its life cycle. There should be a significant number of the particular species recorded on the site.
    - Sites which have been recognised as County Wildlife Sites or Local Geological Sites.

- Sites which form part of the local ecological network, for example a habitat which provides a link or 'stepping stone' between other sites recognised for their wildlife importance and provides a significant example of that particular type of habitat and;
- The site should be ideally within 300 metres, but not more than 600 metres of the community it serves (measured using the route that would be taken to walk, not as the crow flies). The ideal distance is based on the Natural England ANGST (Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards) standard which is considered to be an appropriate walking distance

The sites identified have been assessed against these criteria.

### **Publicity and Consultation**

The proposed sites were displayed at the Neighbourhood Plan consultation event in March 2019. Attendees were asked to complete a questionnaire indicating the level of support for the proposals, and also to identify any additional sites which should be considered. 227 residents attended the event, and 56 questionnaires were completed.

The landowners (including those living outside the village) of these sites have been contacted to bring the proposed designation to their attention and a copy of a sample letter is included in Attachment 1. Responses were received from the majority of landowners, and all who responded were agreeable to the proposals.

Maps of proposed Local Green Spaces



Figure 2: Map of proposed Local Green Spaces in Turvey Village





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Figure 3 :Map of proposed Local Green Spaces in Station End

Local Green Spaces - proposed sites

## The sites

### Site A : Footpath adjacent to Abbey Square and Holmwood House



View north from High Street

This site was designated as a Village Open Space in 2013 under the criteria 'provides visual relief in an otherwise built up area punctuating the street scene.' It is approximately 0.1 ha, and is privately owned, with a footpath across it. It meets the criteria of beauty, being an intrinsic feature of the adjacent listed buildings in the conservation area. It is adjacent to the community it serves.

54 of the 56 respondents to the questionnaire agreed that this site should be designated as Local Green Space.



### Site C : The Green



The Green facing east

This site was designated as a Village Open Space in 2013 under the criteria 'provides visual relief in an otherwise built up area punctuating the street scene' and 'publicly accessible and valuable to the local community for sport, recreation or as amenity space.' It is approximately 0.29 ha and is privately owned by the adjacent properties. It meets the criteria of beauty, being an intrinsic feature of the adjacent listed buildings in the conservation area. It is adjacent to the community it serves.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.

## Site D : Lancelot's Piece and The Roundel



Lancelot's Piece (left) and The Roundel (right) view west from High Street

This site was designated as a Village Open Space in 2013 under the criteria 'provides visual relief in an otherwise built up area punctuating the street scene' and 'publicly accessible and valuable to the local community for sport, recreation or as amenity space.' It is approximately 0.2 ha. Lancelot's Piece is privately owned and The Roundel is owned by the Highways Department of Bedford Borough Council. It meets the criteria of beauty, being an intrinsic feature of the adjacent listed buildings in the conservation area. It is adjacent to the community it serves. It has historic significance; Lancelot's Piece formerly was home to Lancelot, the vicar's donkey, and now the village Christmas tree is erected on the site each year. The trees planted on The Roundel are memorials for distinguished village residents.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.



## Site E : Recreation Ground



View north from Grove Road

This site was designated as a Village Open Space in 2013 under the criteria 'The open space assists the transition between village and countryside providing a soft edge to the village which is pleasing visually' and 'publicly accessible and valuable to the local community for sport, recreation or as amenity space.' It is approximately 3.08 ha. The recreation ground is owned by the Parish Council. The Parish Council has provided a range of play equipment on the site, and a sports pavilion and tennis courts are on the site. There is a public footpath across the site, forming part of the Ouse Valley Way. It meets the criteria of recreational value, being adjacent to the community and well used by the community it serves.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.



## Site F : The Cemetery



The Cemetery facing north

This site is to the north of the village. It is approximately 0.56 ha and is managed by the Parish Council. It contains a number of historic graves dating back to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and has an inscribed lych gate. It meets the criteria of historical significance and of tranquillity.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.

## Site G : All Saints Churchyard



The churchyard facing east, including Higgins Family Mausoleum

The site is in the centre of the village. It is approximately 0.28 ha. It contains the Grade II listed Higgins Family Mausoleum, and a number of historic graves. It is owned by the church, and meets the criteria of beauty, being intrinsic to the setting of the Grade I listed medieval church, tranquillity and historical significance.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.



**Site H : Area south of river bridge adjacent to The Three Fyshes and area west of Mill Pond (Jonah's statue)**



View facing north



View facing west

This site comprises a small area of land (0.11 ha) south of the river bridge on the eastern bank of the mill pond, adjacent to the Grade II listed Three Fyshes public house, and an area of land on the western bank of the mill pond on which the Grade II listed statues of Jonah and Jonah's wife are situated. It is adjacent to, and provides a setting for, Turvey Bridge which is a Scheduled Monument. The land adjacent to the Three Fyshes is owned by the Parish Council, and the area of land on the western bank of the mill pond is owned by the residents of The Mill. It "meets the criteria of beauty and historical significance.

Kingfisher, Grey Heron and Little Egret have been observed in the river at this location, and Grey Wagtail have bred on the site.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.



### Site J : Four paddocks between Jacks Lane and Newton Lane



Site facing east



Site facing north towards village

This site comprises four privately owned paddocks, an area totalling approximately 3.88 ha to the immediate south of the village. It is traversed by a public footpath, part of the Turvey Circular Walk promoted by Bedford Borough Council. It is a popular area for walking, and horses graze in one paddock. The extreme south end of the area is on rising land and offers views of the church tower and parts of the conservation area of the village. It meets the criteria of recreational value and tranquillity.

These areas of green spaces are contained within the designated Green Infrastructure Opportunity Zone: Upper Great Ouse River Valley (AD24), contain a high level of biodiversity and act as a natural corridor for wildlife to move around the southern half of the village and into the neighbouring open countryside in safety. Additionally they contain two sites registered in the Bedford Historic Environment Record, being the site of stone pits worked between 1540 and 1900 cutting through medieval ridge and furrow earthworks. Beyond their role within the village for both animals and people to move safely around the southern side of the village, this area also forms part of the National Forest Inventory, for woodland improvement of high spatial priority within a woodland priority habitat network, further emphasising the very important role of these areas have in contributing to the biodiversity of Turvey and the open countryside with which they connect and of which they are apart.

The biodiversity present on these sites includes many European Protected Species that fall under the auspices of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and The Conservation Regulations 1994 (derived from the European Habitats Directive). The UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species and

NERC Act (2006) Species of Principal Importance for England, recorded in Bedfordshire and Luton, includes reference to a number of species recorded by the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and BedsLife (Bedfordshire & Luton Biodiversity Partnership: 'Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedfordshire & Luton'):

- Bird species classified within this area include, and are not limited to: Yellow Wagtail, Skylark, Fieldfare, Turtle Dove, Northern Lapwing and Grey Partridge, covered under a Bedfordshire & Luton Species Action Plan together with a number of owl species including: Barn Owl, Little Owl and Tawny Owl. Hobby, Buzzard, Red Kite, Sparrowhawk and Kestrel have been observed recently. Marsh Tit breeds on the woodland border, and Kingfisher, Grey Heron and Little Egret have been noted along the stream through the site.
- Mammals recorded include a large number of species: Otters\*, Northern European Hedgehogs; bat species - including but not limited to: Myotis sp., Noctule\*, Serotine, Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle\*, Pipistrellus sp. and Nathusius pipistrelle.
- Invertebrates present / using the site include: Great Crested Newt\* (*Triturus cristatus*), and reptiles present include: Slow worms and Grass snakes.
- Flora species include Adders Tongue Fern, Devils Bit Scabious and Greater Burnet.

\* Species afforded European Protected Species status, (as recorded by Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre – Bedfordshire and Luton, together with the UK National Biodiversity Network and a survey conducted by Just Ecology Environmental Consultancy Ltd.).

This greenspace meets the policy of Bedford Borough Council to: "Protect and enhance the countryside biodiversity and geodiversity" and the Green Space Strategy (GSS6) 6.1 "Protect and enhance local biodiversity with particular reference to relevant priority habitats and species associated with publicly accessible green spaces, in accordance with both the Biodiversity Action Plan and Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedford Borough."

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.

### Site K : Grassed area at Station End



Site facing west

This site is a short strip of grassed land with several mature trees which provides a green barrier between the main A428 and a row of houses on Bedford Road. It represents a focal point for the setting of Station End, shaping the character of the small settlement. As such it meets the criteria for beauty. It is approximately 0.05 ha and is owned by Bedford Borough Council Highways department.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.



### Site L : Priory Close playground



View of site facing south

This small site ((approximately 0.02 ha) is owned by the Parish Council. It is a small paved play area with seating in the centre of a development of modern houses at Station End. It meets the criteria for recreational value.

54 of the 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.

### Site M : Turvey Allotments



Site facing east

This site to the north side of the village comprises a number of allotments, over 80% of which are regularly leased to tenants. It is adjacent to the community it serves. This site was designated as a Village Open Space in 2013 under the criteria 'The open space assists the transition between village and countryside providing a soft edge to the village which is pleasing visually' and 'publicly accessible and valuable to the local community for sport, recreation or as amenity space.' The site is part of the Turvey House estate, and is approximately 0.34 ha. It meets the criteria for recreational value.

All 56 respondents to the consultation agree this site should be designated as Local Green Space.



### Site N : Grassed squares in Grove Road



#### Two grassed squares in Grove Road

This site comprises two separate grass courtyard squares in a modern housing development on the north side of the village. They are about 0.04 ha in total and are immediately adjacent to the community they serve. They are owned by the owners of the surrounding houses. They form a focal point of the development, and shape the character of the area. They meet the criteria for beauty.

These sites were not included in the original consultation and were put forward by visitors to the exhibition.



### Other sites proposed at consultation

Village residents suggested a number of other sites for Local Green Space designation during the consultation. The sites which were proposed, but have not been put forward for designation are

Site	Reason given	Response
Patch at bottom of Elmwood		This is a tiny area with little local amenity
Land adjacent to Abbey Cottage	Should be classed as parkland. Trees should have TPOs. Large population of Great Crested Newts. Orchids including a Bee Orchid have been seen, Hunting ground for Barn Owls. Wood has elm trees. Pond & pond in field. Ancient ridge & furrow. Ant hills	This is a field of over 4 ha which is on the edge of the village. It has no public access. It was originally proposed as a potential housing site, but has since been withdrawn. The land is not recorded as having ridge and furrow features in the Bedford Historic Environment Record.
The Spinney (adjacent to Abbey Field)	Site has large amount of wildlife and elm trees	This site extends about 400m from the nearest housing. It has no public access.
Land beside river in front of Turvey House	The views coming into Turvey are stunning.	Site is Grade II listed parkland. The Borough Council has a policy to conserve the historic parkland
Abbey Fields (between Jacks Lane and Abbey Farm)	Outstanding in terms of their heritage (ridge & furrow) and landscape value	This is an extensive area of over 26 ha.
Allotments on Newton Lane	Should be regenerated as allotments for use by Turvey residents	This is part of a site put forward for housing development.
Area surrounding the Abbey		This is privately owned land with no public access or amenity
Newton Lane East		This site has been put forward for housing development so cannot be included at this stage.
Sam's Island and land to the west of Turvey bridge		These areas are outside Turvey parish.

## Summary of proposed designations

Land Parcel reference	Name	Approx Size	Criteria								Ownership
			Proximity to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to the community and holding special significance because of its							
				Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Wildlife	Footpaths	Tranquility	Other Quality	
A	Footpath adjacent to Abbey Square/ Holmwood House	0.1 ha	√	√				√		Setting of adjacent listed buildings	Owner of adjacent house, Abbey Square
C	The Green	0.29 ha	√	√							Residents of The Green
D	Lancelot’s Piece and The Roundel	0.2 ha	√	√	√						Lancelot’s Piece is privately owned. The Roundel is owned by Bedford Borough Council
E	Recreation Ground	3.08 ha	√			√		√			Parish Council
F	Cemetery	0.36 ha	√		√				√		Parish Council
G	Churchyard	0.37 ha	√		√				√		All Saints
H	Area south of river bridge adjacent to Three Fyshes & west of millpond	0.03 ha	√	√	√		√				Parish Council / Mill residents

Land Parcel reference	Name	Approx Size	Criteria								Ownership
			Proximity to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to the community and holding special significance because of its							
				Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Wildlife	Footpaths	Tranquillity	Other Quality	
J	Four paddocks between Jacks lane and Newton Lane	4.38 ha	√			√	√	√	√	Part of the Borough Council’s circular walk	Resident of Bank Cottage and Turvey Estate
K	Grassed area at Station End layby	0.03 ha	√	√						Shapes local character	Bedford Borough Council
L	Priory Close playground	0.02 ha	√			√					Parish Council
M	Turvey Allotments	0.34 ha	√			√					Turvey House estate
N	Grove Road Squares	0.04 ha	√	√							Residents of houses



## Attachment 1

### Letter to site owners

#### Turvey Neighbourhood Plan Proposals for Greenspace Designation

Dear Resident,

Parish Councils have the opportunity to put forward proposals for Green Space designation within Neighbourhood Plans. This provides special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have been reviewing the options to identify plots of land in the village that appear to fit the criteria for Green Space designation.

It is our intention to include our Greenspace proposals in a consultation event planned for March 2019. However, we are giving advanced notice to landowners and residents living nearby some of the spaces being put forward in order to hear their views about the specific space that they own or live near, before the consultation event takes place. The map overleaf shows the spaces that are currently under consideration.

We are notifying you because we have included **the open grassed area to the north east of Abbey Square** (shown as A on the map) because we believe this space has special significance in terms of the setting of nearby listed buildings and the outlook towards open countryside.

If you would like to make comments on this proposal or ask for more information, please email the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at [turveyneighbourhoodplan@btinternet.com](mailto:turveyneighbourhoodplan@btinternet.com)

You can find more information on the GOV.UK website at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation)

**Paul Jenkins**

**On behalf of Turvey Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Turvey - Local Green Space proposal November 18

